

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Daniela Carranza , I am a Resident from Milford

I stand in support of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

I am a CT resident that has been involved in the community trying to help our undocumented community strive. I care about this bill because I believe that it is important for our community to be safe and healthy. Allowing our undocumented children under 18 to access health insurance teaches them the importance of healthcare, promoting a better and healthier future for all CT residents regardless of immigration status.

In my professional life, I work as a case manager at IRIS serving asylum seekers, new residents of CT, and other undocumented members of the New Haven community. Healthcare is a huge barrier, many of my clients have thousands of dollars in medical bills, on top of struggling to make ends meet with food and rent. It breaks my heart to see so many families making the difficult decision between healthcare for their kids, or other basic needs. I am also a tax preparer with VITA so I know first hand how my clients and many undocumented members of the community pay taxes and contribute to the system, without receiving even the most basic rights and services in return.

I've seen many cases in my personal life and work where children and adults have to ignore minor medical issues due to lack of health insurance and fear of hospitals. These minor issues later turn into big health issues often leaving them with chronic conditions or having major surgeries that could have been prevented by routine check ups if they would have had health insurance.

Giving access to health insurance would ensure a healthier community among our children and would provide early intervention in most medical situations.

I support S.B. 284 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,

Daniela Carranza